

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY LONDON

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 127657

LIMDIS

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

FOLLOWING REPEAT DACCA 2624 ACTION SECSTATE INFO

NEW DELHI 29 MAY.

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L DACCA 2624

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, PFOR, BG, XO

SUBJECT: DIEGO GARCIA

REF: STATE 123690

1. LAST AUTHORITATIVE PUBLIC REFERENCE BY BDG TO
DIEGO GARCIA WAS MADE ON DECEMBER 10, 1974. IT WAS
PART OF JOINT COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT END OF INDIAN
FOREIGN MINISTER CHAVAN'S VISIT TO DACCA. RELEVANT PORTION
SAID: BEGIN QUOTE: THE TWO FOREIGN MINISTERS NOYFR
THAT IN SPITE OF THE CONCERN EXPRESSED BY COUNTRIES
OKIN THE INDIAN OCEAN AREA ABOUT THE EXPANSION OF GREAT
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POWER RIVALRY AND MILITARY ACTIVITIES IN THE REGION,

INCREASED AND HIGHLY SOPHISTICATED NAVAL EXERCISES ARE NONETHELESS BEING CARRIED OUT. THEY EXPRESSED PARTICULAR CONCERN AT THE PROPOSAL TO EXPAND THE MILITARY NAVAL FACILITIES AT DIEGO GARCIA IN THE INDIAN OCEAN. THEY CONSIDERED THESE DEVELOPMENTS TO BE CONTRARY TO THE CONSENSUS IN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY AND IN THE UN THAT THE INDIAN OCEAN AREA SHOULD BE A ZONE OF PEACE. THEY STRESSED THAT THE CONTINUATION OF SUCH MILITARY ACTIVITIES IN THE REGION WOULD AGGRAVATE POWER RIVALRY AND POSE A DIRECT THREAT TO PEACE AND STABILITY IN THE AREA. END QUOTE.

2. WE HAVE HAD NO AUTHORITATIVE PRIVATE EXPRESSION OF HOST GOVERNMENT POSITION SINCE THAT TIME. IF WE ASKED FOR BGD'S UNBIASED VIEW, WE THINK THEY WOULD TELL US THEY ARE AGAINST IT AND URGE US TO RECONSIDER.

3. EXCEPT FOR SEVERAL LOW-KEY OFFICIAL COMMENTS WHEN DIEGO GARCIA ISSUE FIRST AROSE, THE JOINT BANGLADESH-INDIAN COMMUNIQUE OF DECEMBER, 1974 AND ANOTHER JOINT INDO-BANGLADESH COMMUNIQUE ISSUED IN FEBRUARY 1974 HAS BEEN ONLY SPECIFIC PUBLIC REFERENCE BY BGD TO DIEGO GARCIA. THE INTERVENING SILENCES SUGGEST TO US THAT BANGLADESH IS NOT INTERESTED IN MAKING AN ISSUE OF DIEGO GARCIA IF IT POSSIBLE TO AVOID DOING SO. REFERENCES TO DIEGO GARCIA IN JOINT INDO-BANGLADESH COMMUNIQUE REVEAL MORE THE EXTENT TO WHICH NEED FOR EFFECTIVE RELATIONS WITH INDIA CAN COMPEL BANGLADESH TO BREAK ITS SILENCE THAN IT DOES ANYTHING ELSE. BANGLADESH PREFERS TO RELY ON "INDIAN OCEAN ZONE OF PEACE" RUBRIC WHENEVER POSSIBLE. THIS IS CLEARLY A SOFT CODE WORD FOR DIEGO GARCIA BUT ONE WHICH ALLOWS IT TO (1) POINT OUT TO INDIA HOW CLOSELY SOVIET BLANDISHMENTS RE AN "ASIAN COLLECTIVE SECURITY SYSTEM". OF COURSE, WHEN THE INDIANS INSIST, BANGLADESH WILL JOIN IN CONDEMNING DIEGO GARCIA. BOSTER UNQUOTE INGERSOLL

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